



(Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud 3-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

## You can't see me

While searching for a weapons cache, Soldiers from the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army and members of 3rd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, travel through palm groves in the city of Hadid, Iraq, April 21. (See story page 4)

# Insurgents fail to disrupt school opening

By Maj. Kirk Luedeke  
4-1 Inf. Public Affairs

BAGHDAD - The Rashid District Council and 1st Battalion, 6th Brigade, 2nd Iraqi National Police Division conducted a ribbon-cutting ceremony at the Atwan School for boys April 24, despite insurgent efforts to prevent the event from occurring.

Prior to the ceremony, small arms fire had been directed at the school, but after NP and Multinational

Division - Baghdad forces returned fire, the gunmen fled.

"We will not be stopped by the terrorists," Ra'ad said to the crowd of boys ranging from elementary school age all the way up through high school. "We will all live in peace together."

"Education is the future for Iraq," said Sabeeh Al-Ka'abi, the director of the Rashid District Council, who presided over the school opening with Col. Ra'ad Eyas Amin, the 1st NP

Battalion commander.

The Atwan School is located in the Mechanix neighborhood of the Rashid District in southern Baghdad. The renovation of the school included improvements to the outer wall, installment of new doors, electrical wiring, fans, plumbing, 100 new desks and 40 blackboards for the 650 students who attend classes there.

After the event, policemen handed

See School Page 2

# School goes on

## School

From Page 1

out soccer balls to the students.

As those gathered began to disperse, shots rang out once again, as the insurgents returned for one more unsuccessful attempt to disrupt the proceedings.

"This just goes to show how little regard these crimi-

nals have for human life," said Col. Ricky D. Gibbs, 4th Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division commander.

"They tried to take what was a celebration of a much-improved learning institution and instead put children in harm's way. They did not succeed, and now everyone can see the kinds of tactics they employ," he said.



Col. Ra'ad Eyas Amin, commander of the 1st Bn., 6th Bde., 2nd Div. National Police, talks to the children at the Atwan School for boys' ribbon-cutting ceremony April 24.



(Photos by Maj. Kirk Luedeke 4-1 Inf. Public Affairs)

Sabeeh Al Ka'abi, the head of the Al Rashid District Council, and Col. Ra'ad Eyas Amin, commander of the 1st Battalion, 6th Brigade, 2nd Division National Police, take in the scene at the ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Atwan School for boys in Baghdad's Rashid District.

## Arabic Phrase of the Day

jaaf

Defined:  
dry

## Iraq 3-Day Weather Report



Today

High: 90  
Low: 68



Tomorrow

High: 90  
Low: 66



Monday

High: 91  
Low: 66

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## Baghdad in Brief

### Iraqi civilians attempt to stop truck bomb

CAMP TAJI, Iraq - Iraqi civilians attempted to stop a vehicle-borne improvised explosive device near Al Hamdanyia, Iraq, as it detonated 500 meters before an observation post manned by Multi-National Division - Baghdad forces April 24.

Witnesses reported several Iraqi civilians attempting to pull the driver from the vehicle and a white sedan attempting to position itself between the truck, carrying the payload of explosives, and chlorine tanks just before the vehicle exploded.

The driver of the truck and one Iraqi civilian were killed. Two Iraqi civilians were wounded and one was sickened in the attack.

Soldiers from Troop E, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry Regiment responded to the explosion, securing the site and providing medical assistance. No soldiers were injured or killed in the incident.

### Iraqi Army-led mission nets large cache in Ghazaliya

BAGHDAD - Iraqi troops from the 3rd Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army Division, together with a military transition team from the Multi-National Division - Baghdad discovered a large weapons cache in Baghdad's Ghazaliya district April 26.

The Iraqi troops acted on a tip and found the cache in the Shulla neighborhood, in the northwestern portion of the Iraqi capital.

Following a cordon and search of the area, the Iraqi troops found 127 mortar rounds, more than 200 pounds of TNT, 10,000 PKC rounds, 10 mortar tubes, 15 hand grenades, 13 rifles, including two M16s, 150 fuses and three anti-tank mines.

The Iraqi Army troops also detained seven suspected insurgents in the operation.



(Photo by Capt Brian McCall 2-32 Field Artillery Regiment)

**An Iraqi Army medic assists an elderly Iraqi man, one of more than 100 residents seen during a community health outreach mission in Baghdad's Hateen neighborhood April 18.**

## Iraqi Army leads community outreach

**1st Lt. Charles Bloomfield  
2-32 Field Artillery Regiment**

BAGHDAD - More than local residents received medical attention in the Hateen neighborhood of Iraq's capital city April 18.

Soldiers from 3rd Battalion, 5th Brigade, 6th Iraqi Army worked with 2nd Battalion, 32nd Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division to conduct a community health outreach program. The program was designed to give medical attention to local residents who normally do not have access to medical assistance.

"We assessed and treated 102 patients over about two-and-a-half hours," said Junction City, Kan., native Capt. Brian McCall, commander of 2-32nd's Battery A. "We did not leave

anyone in line; all (who) came were seen."

The combined Iraqi, coalition force mission was conducted in coordination with the local neighborhood advisory council.

"Mr. Jafron Hassan, a neighborhood advisory council representative, helped the Iraqi Army control the crowd and usher people through the entry control point," added McCall. "The response from the populace was overwhelmingly positive. Lt. Col. Rahim, the 3rd Bn. Iraqi Army commander, and his men did a great job and really took the lead on the whole event."

The Iraqi Army battalion surgeon, with his two medics, took the lead on the majority of the assessment and treatment, McCall noted, while a physician's assistant for the 2-32nd pitched in, as needed.

# IA, MiTT conduct successful cordon, knock

By Spc. Ryan Stroud  
3-1 Cav. Public Affairs

BAQOUBA, Iraq -- Dust and dirt flew from under the tires into the air as a long row of Iraqi Army and Coalition Forces' humvees and Bradley Fighting Vehicles cordoned the dirt roads of the city of Hadid, Iraq, April 21.

With little updated intelligence about the area, both IA and U.S. Soldiers had to use past information they had learned about the town.

The last time these Soldiers traveled the roads of Hadid, they discovered 11 improvised explosive devices on a small section of the road into town, placed there to attack both the IA and Coalition Forces.

But this past experience would not shake the determined fighters of freedom. They had a mission -- make their way into the city to conduct a cordon and knock, and go door-to-door; meeting every citizen they could and gather as much information about the presence of al-Qaida in their city.

With the 1st Battalion, 2nd Brigade, 5th Iraqi Army leading the way into Hadid, Soldiers from different units of the 3rd "Grey Wolf" Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, combined forces to form the 1-2-5 Military Transition Team to help guide the young group of Iraqi soldiers into the city.

The job's of those in the MiTT is to travel with the IA and make sure they are carrying out their missions to the proper standards, and with the mission they faced, the IA soldiers were about to learn about a different way to gather information.

"The purpose of the mission was to capture and defeat Iraq insurgents in the town of Hadid in



(Photo by Spc. Ryan Stroud 3-1 Cav. Public Affairs)

**A 1st Bn., 2nd Bde., 5th IA soldier begins to climb the steps of a home in the town of Hadid, Iraq, to support a fellow brother-in-arms during their cordon and knock mission, April 21.**

order to make it a safer place to live," said Capt. Brian Slotnick, a native of Tom's River, N.J., and a member of 215th Brigade Support Battalion.

"We conducted a cordon and knock mission," said Sgt. 1st Class Patrick Gage, a native of Fort Wayne, Ind., and a member of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1-12 Combined Arms Battalion.

"The main reason the mission was [a cordon and knock and not a cordon and search] was because we didn't have specific targets," Maj. Dominique Dionne, a native of Harker Heights, Texas, and a member of the brigade's Headquarters and Headquarters Troop.

"When we have no intelligence driving an operation, we inform the [IA] leaders that this is more of a presence-type mis-

sion," Dionne, the MiTT Leader, said. "You knock on the doors, you talk politely to the people, you conduct your search and you find out what they know and what information they can give you."

The IA soldiers knocked on the doors to homes, checked identification and asked if the citizens had any information they would like to share about the area. The cordon and knock was beginning to become a success when information about two abandoned cars in the town, believed to be al-Qaida related, and a small cache in the palm groves, were discovered through the citizen's help.

"[Through the help of the citizens] we did capture some good intelligence as well as some weapons and ammunition," said Slotnick. "That's one less thing

the insurgents will have in their hands."

As the mission drew to a close, the members of the IA and MiTT headed back to their patrol base to catch a few hours of sleep and prepare for the next day's mission.

"I felt the mission was a success," said Gage. "We got some people who we think are bad guys and we were able to show some community support. I think this was a good day for us."

"The situation has changed the past few years in Iraq," added Slotnick. "It used to be busting down doors, but for [the day's mission], the intelligence we had wasn't at a specific target, so we were very respectful with entering the houses.

"But when we got in the city and talked to many of the community leaders and teachers, they were saying the people do not like the al-Qaida and the majority of the people want the IA and the [Iraqi Police] in there patrolling to keep the bad people out," he said.

"That was a good thing for us to hear and it will help convince the IA to conduct more patrols in the town now that they know the population does support them," Dionne said.

Since the MiTT has been working with the IA battalion, Dionne said they are helping the IA understand how important it is to interact face-to-face with the local population.

"If we get [the IA soldiers] to see that these are real living, breathing, bleeding people on both sides, they start to get the common bond that they are all Iraqis, they all have problems and they need to work together to come up with the solution," he concluded.



# NBA playoffs - the future revealed

By Pfc. M. Benjamin Gable  
7th MPAD

With the NCAA basketball season behind us, the only hoops left is the National Basketball Association's playoffs. I would rather focus on my fantasy baseball team (which is in first place, by the way), but I will take this opportunity to fill you in on what to look forward to in the playoffs.

I am not the basketball fan I once was. However, I need to redeem myself after choosing Ohio State to win the college basketball championship and giving my sergeant major the field versus my Tiger Woods in the Masters. So far this year, I am 2-2 in my predictions, having also chosen the Indianapolis Colts to win the Super Bowl and the Florida Gators to win the Bowl Championship Series championship.

So, without further delay, your NBA champions this year will be the.....

Wait. That would be too easy. Let's start with who will come out of the first round.

The first round will not be too interesting. One match-up that does catch my eye is in the Western Conference. The San Antonio Spurs will have an early test against the Denver Nuggets. New acquisition Allen Iverson will help make it interesting, but nothing more. Iverson is in the twilight of his career and Carmelo Anthony hasn't proven much in his. The Spurs made it a point to keep Tim Duncan and Manu Ginobili's minutes down this year to save them for the playoff run. While the majority of first round series will go six or

## Trigger Pull

Pfc.  
Benjamin  
Gable



seven games, mostly for ratings and revenue, this will be the only one worth watching. Spurs take it in six.

Once again, the Spurs will have a tough test in the second round. They will take on the Phoenix Suns who have the home court advantage. The Suns are a run and gun team, which works great in the regular season; or preseason as I call it, but they won't be able to play enough defense to stop the playoff-proven Spurs. Expect to see Steve Nash on a golf course near you.

You're probably wondering why I haven't mentioned any Eastern Conference teams yet. Well, that's because they all stink. The Heat are playing with an injured Dwayne Wade; and Shaquille O'Neal, while still a monster in the paint, can't carry a team full of has-beens by himself. They will go down quietly in the second round versus the Detroit Pistons.

Speaking of the Pistons, they will run into the Cleveland Cavaliers in the Eastern Conference Finals. LeBron James finally takes his first steps to becoming the next "Great One." The Cavs beat the aging, and at this time in the playoffs, tired, Pistons.

Now back to the Western Conference and

what will prove to be the best series in the playoffs.

The Spurs will take on the Dallas Mavericks, who are led by their All-Star power forward Dirk Nowitzki. The Mavs have the home court advantage, and will push the Spurs to the limit. With Duncan and Nowitzki playing at the top of their games, it will come down to experience.

Enter "Big Shot Bob." That's right. Robert Horry.

Horry will prove once again why he is a future Hall of Fame candidate. Look for Horry to make the play in game seven that clinches the Western Conference, and by default, the NBA championship.

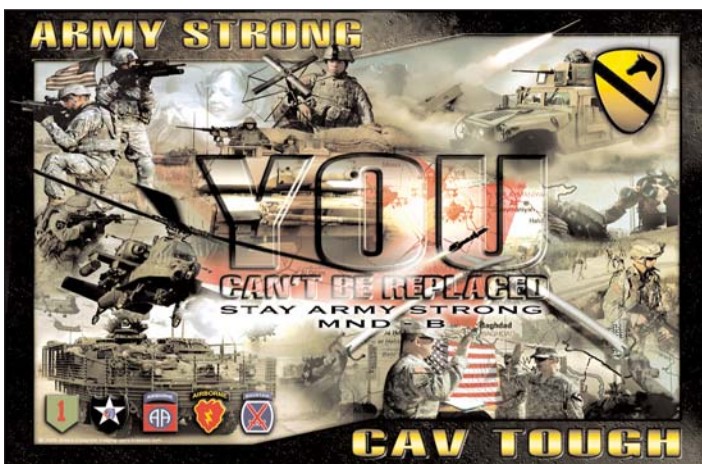
The NBA finals will be lackluster at best. "King James" will have a huge series, but the Cavs will go down in "king flames." They simply don't have the talent to beat the Spurs in a seven game series. Larry Hughes, shooting guard for the Cavs, is a joke, and don't get me started on Eric Snow, the point guard for the Cavs.

The Spurs' Ginobili, Tony Parker, Bruce Bowen and Tim Duncan will be too much for the Cavs to handle.

San Antonio brings the championship back to the "Lone Star State." Duncan will solidify himself as the greatest power forward of all time after winning yet another finals Most Valuable Player award.

And Tony Parker, point guard for the Spurs? Well, he's married to Eva Longoria.

Which makes me think, which would you rather have?



**OPERATION IRAQI  
FREEDOM**

WHEN RUNNING ON LIBERTY OR ANY FOB:

- WEAR YOUR REFLECTIVE SAFETY BELT
- DO NOT WEAR HEADPHONES
- STAY HYDRATED
- DO NOT RUN ON THE PERIMETER
- STAY ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF THE ROAD
- AVOID STEPPING ON OR KICKING DEBRIS
- WHEN RUNNING IN FORMATION ALL MEMBERS OF THE FORMATION MUST STAY WITHIN THE RIGHT LANE

IF IT CAN HAPPEN.... IT WILL HAPPEN—THINK SAFETY!